

Question from Councillor Roger Mace to Councillor Janice Hanson

Are there any steps the City Council is able to take to protect buildings in prominent positions in the City Centre within the heart of the Lancaster Conservation Area when such buildings have been standing vacant for over two years?

Councillor Hanson responded to say:

The Council has powers under untidy sites legislation and listed building controls to take action to secure the repair and improvement of buildings where they fall into poor condition and their condition can pass certain amenity tests. Vacancy by itself would not automatically give rise to a case for action.

Councillor Mace asked a supplementary question about one building in particular, the Oddfellows Hall in Lancaster, and what could be done to protect it. Councillor Hanson said she would provide a reply in writing.

Question from Councillor Roger Mace to Councillor Janice Hanson

Is the City Council actively seeking Enterprise Zone status for any part of the district?

Councillor Hanson replied:

There are no current opportunities to seek Enterprise Zone status for any part of the district, nor do any parts appear to meet the criteria from previous rounds to bid.

Councillor Hanson also said that the Chairman of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Edwin Booth, had written to David Morris MP to let him know that the district had failed to meet the criteria. If Mr Morris, who was keen on Enterprise Zones, could assist or help, perhaps by talking with Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government about changing the criteria, then the Council would be only too happy to work with him.

Councillor Mace asked a supplementary question:

Could we please have circulated, to all Councillors, a comprehensive summary of the pros and cons of having an Enterprise Zone in the district?

Councillor Hanson agreed to this.

Question from Councillor Peter Williamson to Councillor Darren Clifford

Several weeks ago I asked for copies of the 'Business Cases for all three Community Swimming Pools (Carnforth, Heysham and Hornby).

Page 79 of the 2017 – 2021 Budget Process document presented to Council on 1 March 2017 talks of building business cases for Heysham and Carnforth Pools but goes on to say 'no viable business case exists for Hornby Pool'.

May I please see these three business cases to enable local residents in Hornby to make alternative provisions as they see fit.

Councillor Clifford explained that the business cases were available as part of the background papers for Cabinet in February 2017 and he had copies of the information with him which he would pass Councillor Peter Williamson. The pools in Carnforth and Heysham were housed on the same site as the schools, which wasn't the case in Hornby and this had affected the viability of any business case.

Councillor Peter Williamson asked a supplementary question. Stressing the importance of the pool in Hornby as a facility and meeting place of great value to the rural community, not just 'a puddle of water', he asked why the pool had been treated differently to The Platform.

Councillor Clifford re-iterated that the fact the pool was not co-located with the school had been a huge problem. He cited financial outlay taking place in rural areas on other initiatives as evidence that the Council was not letting down its countryside communities.